cultivable land for non agricultural purposes including Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Land for SEZs is procured as per the policy and procedures of the respective State Governments.

(c) and (d) Though, there has been an increase in land under non agricultural uses yet, the "net sown area" in the country has remained approximately the same *i.e.* 141 million ha due to various interventions made by the Government.

Crop insurance for farmers

2038.PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to provide crop insurance for farmers dealing in tea, coffee, rubber, tobacco and spices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether State Governments have been asked to share the insurance premium for farmers benefiting from the scheme; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposed scheme is to cover growers of rubber, tobacco and spices with land holding up to 10 hectares and growers of tea and cardamom, with a land holding between 10-50 hectares. The farmers will be required to become a member of Price Stabilisation Fund Trust (PSFT) by paying a membership fee. The scheme is proposed to be implemented by the respective Commodity Board alongwith PSFT as the nodal agency in the Department of Commerce and by the Consortium of Insurance Companies.

(c) and (d) A Group of Ministers (GOM) constituted by the Government to consider the proposal on Crop Insurance Scheme for Tea, Rubber, Tobacco and Spices decided in its meeting held on 5th November, 2008 to discuss the issue of sharing premium subsidy between the Centre and the State Governments in the meeting of Chief Ministers of States. The reactions of the States would be known after the meeting of Chief Ministers of States.

Foodgrains production

2039.SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of rice, wheat and pulses produced in the country during the years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(b) whether this quantity is expected to increase during the year 2008-09; and

(c) the reasons for and efforts to back the expectations to turn into reality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The quantities of rice, wheat and pulses produced in the country from 2005-06 to 2007-08 are indicated in the table below:

(Million Tonnes)

Crop	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
Rice	91.79	93.35	96.43
Wheat	69.35	75.81	78.40
Pulses	13.39	14.20	15.11

* 4th Advance Estimates released on 09.07.2008

(b) and (c) As per the 1st Advance Estimates released on 25.09.2008, the production of kharif rice and kharif pulses during 2008-09 is estimated at 83.25 million tonnes and 4.72 million tonnes as compared to their production of 82.81 million tonnes and 6.45 million tonnes respectively during kharif 2007-08. As sowing of Rabi crops is in progress, the estimates of wheat production during 2008-09 are not available. However, as per the latest trends of area coverage, the total production (Kharif + Rabi) of these crops during 2008-09 is also likely to be higher than their production during 2007-08.

To increase the production of cereals in the country, the Integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) in rice, wheat and coarse cereals is under implementation since October 2000.

In order to further increase the production of rice, wheat and pulses, the Government has launched National Food Security Mission (NFSM) from Rabi 2007-08. The NFSM aims at increasing the production of rice by 10 million tonnes, wheat by 8 million tonnes and pulses by 2 million tonnes in the targeted districts of the country, by the end of the 11th Plan *i.e.* 2011-2012.

To increase the production of pulses, a centrally sponsored "Integrated Scheme on Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is also under implementation with effect from 01.04.2004 in 14 major pulses growing States in the country. Under the Scheme, financial assistance is provided for purchase of breeder seeds, production of foundation and certified seeds, distribution of seed minikits, distribution of plant protection chemicals and equipments, weedicides, distribution of sprinkler sets, water carrying pipes and training to encourage farmers to grow these crops.

Rules for confirmation of employees in ICAR

†2040. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Group IV employees employed in the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi since 1992;

(b) the number of those employees who have been confirmed and those who are still temporary;

(c) the time limit as per rule, for confirmation of employees; and

(d) by when, these temporary employees would be confirmed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) 78 (Seventy eight).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.